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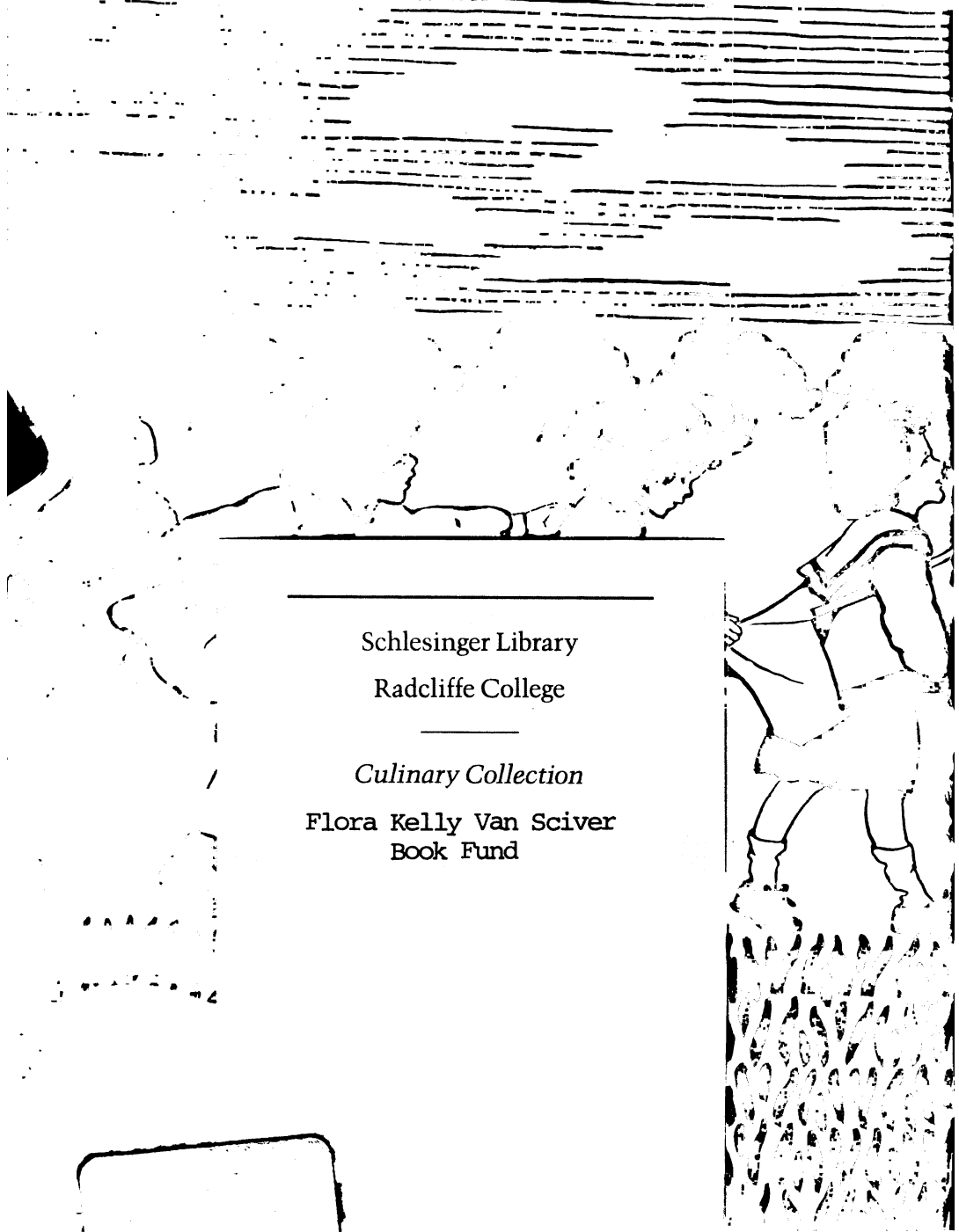
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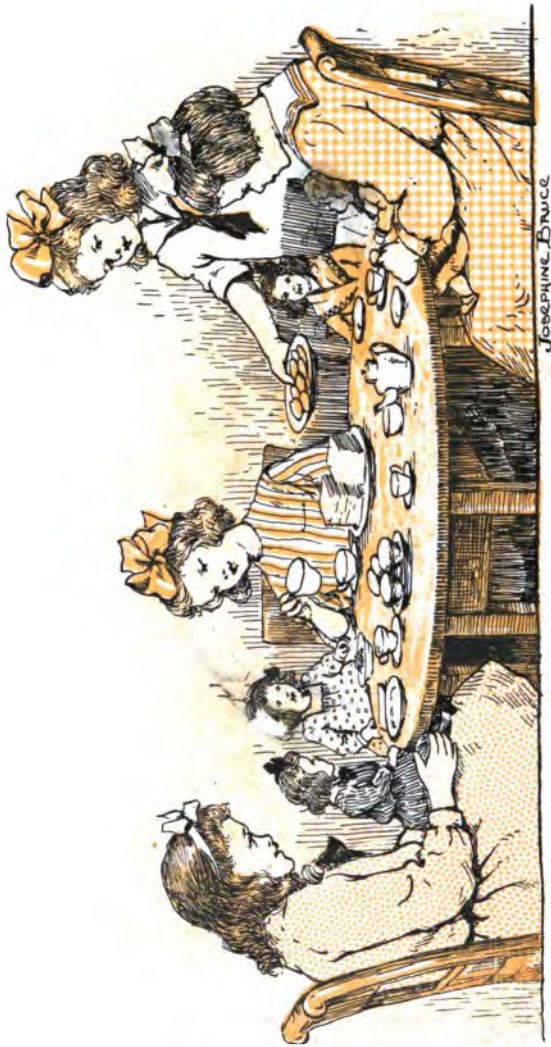
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JOSEPHINE BRUCE



Happy Hour Series

Some Little Cooks

and What They Did

Edited by

Elisabeth Hoyt

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SOME LITTLE COOKS

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THE DOLLS' PARTY

“WELL, I wonder what my little girls are so busy talking about?” said mother as she looked into the nursery and saw two little heads together, and two little tongues wagging fast over something which seemed *very* important.

“Oh, mama, we are talking about having a party for our dollies. You know Amelia May and Dottie Dimple have been shut up in the house all winter, and I am sure they must be very lonesome, and would be delighted to have Marion and Jennie bring over Mary Jane and Susan to spend the afternoon. Of course, we should have to have ‘freshments,’ and that’s just what we were trying to plan out. We want something that *we* like, too. See!”

"Perhaps I can help you," said mama, "and when we have it all decided I will tell Bridget about it; she is so ready to do nice things for you children. Now, what have you thought of first?"

"We just love those dear little cup cakes, with pink and white frosting; they look so pretty and taste so good. You know, mama, Bridget makes them lovely."

"Yes, dear, you can have some of them, and I am sure Bridget would be willing to let you help stir up the cake, and maybe spread the frosting," said mama.

"Oh, oh," cried both, "wouldn't that be splendid? We should feel that it was really our *very* own party every way, wouldn't we, mama?"

"Yes," said mama. "I think you would very much enjoy helping, and now, what next have you planned?"

"Well, we thought some of those cunning cookies with C. on them would be nice. You know C. stands for Christmas, but we will play it stands for *us* now, Cora and Carrie. What do you think about it, mama?"

"I think they will be all right. Have you thought of anything else?"

"It wouldn't be proper, would it, to have nothing

but cake? So we thought we could have some sandwiches, cut the bread *very* thin and spread *very* evenly with peanut butter. And could Bridget cut them with that little heart cutter you used for your Valentine party? Wouldn't they be lovely?"

Mama laughed as she said, "I think my little daughters will make good housekeepers, as they have planned some very nice refreshments. Now when do you propose to have this wonderful party?"

"Saturday afternoon will be all right."

Of course mama said, "Yes," and soon some tiny invitations were sent to Marion's and Jennie's dolls.

It seemed a long while from Wednesday till Saturday, but it quickly passed. Saturday opened sunny and bright, and the little girls were up early, eagerly waiting for Bridget to say she was ready for them to help her, and it was a welcome call when she came in and said, "Where are my little cooks? I am ready for them." Carrie was given the eggs to beat, while Cora mixed the sugar and butter together thoroughly. Their little arms ached some before the work was completed, but neither would give up until Bridget said it was all right, then she finished the cake-making and soon it was in the oven. The children had to peek in every time Bridget opened the



oven door. When the little cakes were all done, and turned out on the table, Bridget said she would make the frosting, and if they would be very, very careful, she would let them spread it on the cakes. What a jolly time they had, and the cakes looked just beautiful, and when the work was all done Bridget let them clean the dish, which you know is always a treat to children.

Promptly at two o'clock Mary Jane and Susan appeared, accompanied by their little mothers. Amelia May and Dottie Dimple were dressed in their Sunday best and smiled sweetly as they received their guests. I wish you could have seen Mary Jane and Susan. Each had a spick span new gown for the occasion, and Susan, although she was rather old and worn, looked very nice in a pretty red dress trimmed with lace, and Mary Jane was too sweet for anything in a new silk.

What fun they had. When it was time to set the table, Cora brought out a dear little set of dishes Santa gave her at Christmas and Carrie got her little round table, which was also a Christmas gift, and mama furnished a table-cloth and a bunch of carnations for the center, and all lent a hand in getting the table set, and when the "goodies" were put on, it looked

lovely. The dollies were then seated around it, and they looked very sweet and prim. As they could not talk, their little mothers said "please" and "thank you" and were very polite in every way for them, and when they were all through, strange to tell, the "'freshments" were all gone.

Can you guess who ate them?



MARIANNA'S CAKE

BUT, Marianna, who will make your cake?
You know mama is gone."

"I'll make it myself," replied Marianna, lifting her sunny head a trifle higher and reaching for the dish-wiper with the air of a young lady of twenty instead of ten years of age. "What is more, it will be good."

"If it was mud pies, sis, I'd believe it, because ——"

"Now, Thomas, you get out of this kitchen unless you want to wipe dishes," interrupted Marianna. "When papa and mama left me home to keep house for you two boys I guess she knew that if it was necessary to make a cake, I could make it."

"But it isn't necessary, goosie."

"Well, who knows most about such things, the housekeeper or the boy who feeds the chickens and the pigs, mister, and goes after the cows and waters the horses and helps his big brother outdoors? Thomas, I tell you farming is your business and Richard's business, but I am the housekeeper!"



Josephine Bruce

"Of course, Marianna, and you are a good house-keeper all right. You know exactly how to walk to the cookie jar and get to a plate of the cookies mama baked yesterday, and you can carry doughnuts too, but I hope you don't mean to tell me that you can bake a cake good enough to take to the picnic to-morrow."

"I said," Marianna insisted with such loftiness of manner Thomas thought the sight good as a play at the schoolhouse, "I said to Maud Brown, we'll furnish a cake!"

"We? have Richard and I got to be in that cake too—that cake you can't make?"

"You run away, little boy, I'm busy," and Marianna pretended to be deaf.

Thomas ran away laughing; but half-way to the barn he stopped in the path to call out at the top of his voice, "She can't bake a cake! she can't bake a cake! She can play checkers but she can't bake a cake."

Straightway the roosters, the hens and the old white turkey gobbler joined in the chorus, "She can't bake a cake, she can't bake a cake!"

"I can, too!" Marianna assured the cat. "Cuddle down, kitty, and watch me stir it up."

With a comforting wink at Marianna the cat again

settled herself on the cushion of the kitchen rocker and began to sing a song of catnip. Cats never sing songs of catnip except when they are happy.

When the dishes were washed and the kitchen in order, Marianna chose the cook-book with the prettiest cover and real cake recipes. At last she decided on coffee cake.

“‘One cup butter,’” read Marianna, “‘one and a half cups brown sugar, yolk of five eggs,’ I am sure it ought to say yolks, ‘one cup sweet milk, three of flour, two teaspoons of baking-powder, one spoon of cinnamon, allspice and cloves.’”

“Let me see! Coffee, first. I am glad it is all ground,” and into the cooking-bowl went a cup full of dry, ground coffee. How was Marianna to know that she should have used liquid coffee from the coffee-pot?

Carefully the little girl measured sugar, butter, milk, baking-powder and spices, not forgetting the yolks of five eggs.

“This is a queer mess,” complained Marianna; “it doesn’t look much like mama’s cake dough, but I don’t remember that I ever saw coffee-cake dough, so maybe this is all right. Only, it seems to me as if it ought to be wetter. Maybe the sugar melts up

into syrup after it is in the oven. Anyway, I have done exactly what the book says."

Into the oven went the crumbly cake dough. In half an hour, out of the oven came crumbly cake.

"But it isn't cake," wailed Marianna, sitting on the floor, her round face flushed with heat, her blue eyes full of tears. "It looks like chicken food! You couldn't cut it, you couldn't eat it."

Marianna dried her eyes, walked to the kitchen door with one cake at a time, tossed the cakes on the ground and called, "Come, chicky, chick, chick, chicky, chick, chick."

The rooster arrived first and what did that ungrateful fellow do but call out to his folks, "She can't bake a cake, she can't bake a cake!"

"I can, too!" declared Marianna, and turning her back to the flock she walked in the kitchen and closed the door.

Again she read the recipe book, while the friendly cat left dreamland long enough to jump in the little girl's lap and say, "Purr, purr, purr," which meant, "Never mind, try again, never mind, try again." Cats are a great comfort at times.

"'White loaf cake,'" read Marianna; "that looks good."

Once more the little girl carefully measured one-third of a cup of butter and one cup of white sugar ; this she mixed together until it was creamy. She had often seen her mother cream butter and sugar and the recipe for white loaf cake plainly said, "Mix to a cream." Next Marianna added "one-half cup water, two teaspoons baking-powder, a little salt and the whites of three eggs beaten stiff. Stir to the right consistency." Marianna overlooked two words in the last line of that recipe, which advised stirring "in flour to the right consistency."

Accordingly Marianna stirred and stirred and stirred and stirred.

"How thin it is !" she murmured. "And how am I going to know about the right consistency? Well, I'll stir it a while longer."

Marianna stirred and stirred and stirred and stirred until her arms ached ; but there seemed no change in the consistency of the mixture in the cake bowl.

"Anyway, it says, 'bake twenty-five minutes,' so here it goes in the oven," concluded the little cook.

At the end of twenty-five minutes the soupy cake was poured in the hen's dish and the tactless fowls repeated their chorus, "She can't bake a cake, she can't bake a cake !"



Thomas heard the noise and came to the house to tease his sister ; but when he found her crying beside a table piled high with dirty dishes, he proved more comforting than the cat.

"Cheer up, sis," he advised. "How do you expect to bake a cake without some lessons? Let me go and get Aunt Florence to show you how."

"I wish you would," came in muffled tones, "because I said we'd bake a cake, and to-morrow is the picnic day."

Aunt Florence came running across lots to help the little housekeeper.

"You must always sift the baking-powder with the flour," she began, "and add your beaten whites of eggs the last thing."

"Oh, I didn't put in any flour in the white cake," confessed Marianna. Then how the cooks laughed.

"No wonder your cake was soup," observed Aunt Florence. "Now let's try your white cake over, with flour. I'll read the recipe and you do the measuring."

That time the dough became a delicious cake. Aunt Florence advised using one and a half cups of flour, which was exactly right ; she also added a few drops of lemon flavoring.

"Do you know how to make maple sugar frosting?" inquired brother Thomas.

"Certainly," agreed Aunt Florence. "You may make that, too, Marianna."

Carefully the little girl measured one cup of maple sugar, one-half cup of white sugar, one-half a cup of cream, and butter the size of a walnut. While it boiled she stirred it continually and when it became thick she spread it on the cake with a knife.

Thomas licked the dish and said he believed that would be the best cake at the picnic. The roosters, too, were good enough to call out, "What? what? what? she baked a cake, she baked a cake!"

When Aunt Florence went home, the children were smiling, and the cat, on the cushion, was singing his song of catnip.





HOW FRANCES HELPED

“**F**RANCES, Frances. Come, honey.”

How still it was, so very still that the voice was brought back by the echo from across the hills in the quiet of the summer day.

At the door of the tiny cottage appeared a tired-looking young woman with a baby in her arms.

These were Frances' mother and baby brother, who with Jack comprised the little family living together in the snug cottage among the hills.

It had been pretty hard for them all when Frances had been taken to the hospital in the winter with a broken leg. Bright, sunny little Frances, who was always so ready to help everybody.

The boys had been coasting, Frances had been in

the way and was thrown down by the sleds, picked up by a kind man and taken to the hospital where she had been kept long weeks in the narrow white bed.

When the leg had mended and the weather was warmer, she had been allowed to return home, limping but happy.

She had been home but a few days when Jack had been taken ill with the grippe, and was now just able to sit up in bed.

"Frances, please mind mother ; come, dear, I need you."

"Coming, mother, coming," in clear, sweet tones, and a tiny figure arose from a field of buttercups and clover, hair as gold as the buttercups, cheeks as red as the clover.

Frances was just seven, and her greatest delight was in living out-of-doors with the birds and flowers. How she loved them ; she knew their songs and they knew her, they were her playmates, her friends, and the wild flowers her very own.

For a minute she hesitated at the door before entering ; she did not want to leave them, but mother needed her, so she went in, casting one loving look behind:



"Take the baby, please, while I get Jack some bread and milk, and then I will try and get baby to sleep."

But Frances had had a happy thought, and said, "Mother, you take the baby into the bedroom and lie down with him, and I will get Jack's luncheon. Perhaps you can go to sleep too; I guess you are tired enough."

"But you couldn't, you don't know how; take baby and I will get it."

But Frances had made a resolve, and, obedient as she had always been, she intended to carry out her plans this time as she wished.

"Please, mother, just this once?"

"Well, you may try, but be careful and not break anything, and be sure to call me if you want any help," and taking the baby in her arms she went into the bedroom.

Left to herself, Frances was for a minute bewildered with the joy of her independence, and then she remembered poor, sick Jack and knew she must hasten to prepare his luncheon.

"Some bread and milk," mother



had said, but Frances knew Jack must be tired of bread and milk, and then, too, she thought of the delicious cocoa the kind nurse had given her when she had been in the hospital. Yes, Jack should have some cocoa.

Somewhere in the house there was some, she knew, because they had it once in a while Sunday nights for supper, or when mother wasn't too tired.

After exploring the pantry and kitchen the cocoa was finally discovered, and Frances took a spoonful, yes, real full, and put it with two spoonfuls of sugar in a little pan, then she mixed it with some warm water until it was smooth, and all the lumps were out, after which she stirred in some hot water, about a cupful, and placed it on the front of the stove to boil.

How happy she was; even here in the kitchen she could hear the birds singing in the trees by the window. The baby had stopped crying and gone to sleep. She hoped mother was sleeping too.

She would be quiet anyway, so she tiptoed into the pantry again, and cut two thin slices of bread, from which she cut the crusts, and placed them on the toaster. She must not toast it until everything was ready, and there was a lot to do yet.

Jack must have an egg, and it must be served on



the thin brown toast, with its golden center surrounded by the snowy white, like one of Frances' big field daisies. But how to do it! In the hospital they always gave them to her that way.

Frances thought and thought, and then ran suddenly to the drawer in the dining-room, took her own napkin-ring, and put it into a shallow pan of water and watched for it to boil.

Next she added a little milk to the cocoa, and set it back on the stove where it should keep hot, but be sure not to boil.

When she had been out in the fields she had found some wild ripe strawberries, and gathered a handful, which, when mother had called, she was putting on a big leaf in the shade to have in the afternoon when she might go out to play again.

Frances loved strawberries, and these were to be a great treat to which she had looked forward, but Jack was sick and they should be his. To-morrow she could gather some more for herself.

Gently she opened and closed the door and flew to the shady nook she knew so well. There they were, just as she had left them all nestled together, fresh, juicy and cool in the cup she had made of the big green leaf.

Frances lifted them in her little hands, and carried them with tender care into the house. Just once she sighed, and looked longingly at the tempting fruit, but no, Jack was sick and they were for him and no one else.

Now she was almost ready to take in his dinner, all but the dishes.

The little closet in the kitchen boasted only some heavy, plain crockery that they used every day, but Frances knew that there was some "best china" in a little closet in the parlor, with pink roses and a gilt border. Did she dare? How pretty the strawberries would look on one of those dishes. Yes, she would, she did dare. Almost guiltily she ran to the closet, took down a precious plate, a dish, and a cup and saucer, and carried them carefully to the kitchen, placing them on a tray over which she had spread a snowy white napkin.

Now it was time to toast the bread and put in the egg. Very carefully she broke the egg into a cup and poured it into the napkin-ring, so it should not separate and go all over the pan.

In a minute the bread was golden brown, and in two minutes the egg ready to take out, which she did with great care, slipping it on to the toast.

Now the cocoa and all was ready. Oh, how good it looked to Frances ; she thought she would be almost willing to have the grippe or another broken leg if she could have that nice luncheon.

As she opened Jack's door she cried out, "Hullo, Jack. Come sit up quick and have your dinner," and then down she sat on the edge of his bed to watch the consuming of her delicious dinner.

How Jack's eyes sparkled when he saw what Frances had brought him, and how she watched every mouthful as it disappeared and her happy voice occasionally rang out, "Is it good, Jack? Do you like it? I did it all myself."

"M-m-yum, bully, Frances. How'd you learn to cook? Bet mother helped. Where'd you get the strawberries?"

"No, sir; mother didn't help a bit; she is asleep with baby. Is it good, Jack, honest?" But Frances need not have asked, for in a few minutes every dish was empty, and Jack lay back in his pillows, happy and satisfied.

When they looked toward the door as Frances rose to take away the tray of very empty dishes, they met the smiling face and eyes of the mother, who had been a silent witness to the joyous feast. She

wrapped her arms around the little figure of Frances, kissed her tenderly and said, "My dear little helper, mother is so rested, baby is asleep and now you and I will have some toast and cocoa too. You have worked hard for big brother, dear little girl, mother's little cook."

And something like a tear glistened on her cheek as she and Frances went together into the little kitchen.



THE TWIN PUMPKINS

ELIZABETH and Edmunds, the twins, were talking earnestly as they stood in the back yard and looked at two bright, golden pumpkins that were growing side by side on a creeping green vine.

The pumpkins were twins, too, for they looked so exactly alike that no one but Elizabeth and Edmunds could tell them apart; while their bright yellow jackets, they had lately put on, made a bit of golden color quite apart from the greens and browns of the other growing things in the yard.

"Now, Elizabeth," said Edmunds, "what have you decided to do with your pumpkin; make a Jack-o'-lantern, as I'm going to with mine?"

"No; at first I thought I would like to have a fairy coach like Cinderella's made of it, but I don't believe there are any fairies here at Summit. Anyway there aren't any with glass slippers and beautiful gowns like Cinderella's. So I told papa I would make him a pie from my pumpkin. A real thick-through one, all brown on the top."

"But you can't make a pie," objected Edmunds. "In the first place you don't know how, and then I don't believe Jane would let you fuss, as she calls it."

Elizabeth didn't seem to notice Edmunds' objections, but answered as if a new thought had come into her mind: "Now, Edmunds, I'll tell you what. You make your pumpkin into a Jack-o'-lantern and I'll make mine into a pie. We will ask mama if we can't have them both on the table at the same time. You know one time we did have a Jack-o'-lantern in the center of the table."

"Yes, yes, Elizabeth," assented Edmunds, "that will be great fun. You make the pie and I'll have my Jack. I'm going to make him grin so you can't help laughing when you see him. Now let's go and ask mama."

So away scampered the twins to find Mrs. James and ask her about the pumpkins.

"May we have the two at the same time?" asked the twins both together.

"Yes, I think so," answered Mrs. James. "We will have them at dinner the evening that Alfred comes home."

"Oh, goody!" exclaimed Edmunds who doted on



his big brother. "I just want Alfred to see my Jack-o'-lantern; I'm sure he'll like it."

"And I want him to have a piece of my pie, too," added Elizabeth as though she was sure the college brother would appreciate that as much as Edmunds' part of the dinner.

And when the time came for the pumpkins to be prepared, two very happy children worked away at them as busy as two children possibly could.

Elizabeth first washed her pumpkin very clean, laughing gaily as she told Jane she was giving Mr. Pumpkin a bath.

"Oh, la, Miss Elizabeth, what in the world will you think of next?" asked Jane who was very fond of the little girl and had told her she might come out in the kitchen and help make the pie.

"Well, next I am going to be a Brownie cook and put in all the nice things in that pie that you tell me to. Of course you will be the big Brownie to see to the little Brownie," added Elizabeth laughing.

This pleased Jane who laughed and laughed at the idea of the big and little Brownie cooks. "Well, miss," said Jane, "we'll make a pie that will be nice enough for anybody—even the President if he were here to get a piece."

"But I don't want him to have a piece of it," exclaimed Elizabeth, "for I am afraid there wouldn't be pieces enough to go around. Let's see;" (and Elizabeth counted on her fingers) "one piece for mama, one for papa, one for Alfred, one for you, one for grandpa, and then just one piece left that Edmunds and I can have together. You see, Jane, there wouldn't be any piece for the President."

So Elizabeth stood close beside Jane and helped sift the flour into a large bowl. Into this they cut tiny pieces of lard, added some salt, and mixed them all together with water.

Then they lined a good big plate with the crust, Elizabeth helping to roll it. But she thought the greatest fun in making the whole pie was in the directions Jane gave her for the mixing the pumpkin part of it :

"If one large pie you wish to make,
You must a tumbler of pumpkin take.
Then of sugar, one-half a cup,
And of eggs, two, well beaten up.
A quart of milk, and then some spice :
Cinnamon and ginger to make it nice.
Put in some salt—then bake it brown
And your pie will be the best in town."

"Oh, Jane," exclaimed Elizabeth, "I know it will

be the best in town. And you are the best Brownie in town, too, to tell a little girl just how to make such a fine pie. I can't wait to taste it, can you?"

And when big brother Alfred came and the two pumpkins were both on the table at once, there were two anxious little people who waited to hear his answer when they asked him which he liked best.



They were delighted, however, when he said he liked them both best. "I like Jack best," said Alfred, "because he looks so jolly and happy I can't help laughing every time I look at the merry fellow; I like the pie best because it is delicious and made by the dearest of little Brownie cooks."

So the twins enjoyed each a half of the last piece of the pie, and both felt sure there could never have been a better way to dispose of the twin pumpkins.

THE LITTLE NEW MARTHA

WITH a hop and a skip Vera turned toward the house after watching the carriage containing Martha, the work-girl, out of sight.

She appeared at the dining-room door, where she stood smiling at her grandmother as she said : " Isn't it fine, grandma, that we can keep the whole house for a week ? When Martha is here we can only keep part of it, but now we can go into the kitchen and keep house there."

Then as if a new thought had come to her she added : " Please, grandma, play I am Martha and tell me what to do. Shall I clear the table first, ma'am ? " she asked in a voice so near like Martha's that grandma laughed heartily as she answered : " Yes, Martha, but be very careful and don't drop any dishes."

So a very merry and happy little Martha flitted back and forth between the dining-room and the kitchen ; stopping often, however, to chip ! chip ! to Flutter, the canary, or to stroke the soft fur of the big ginger-colored house cat, Yellow Jacket, who was

taking a comfortable morning nap in Martha's rocking-chair. Some way he seemed to know the real Martha, who wouldn't let him use that chair for a nap, was away, and in her place was the kind little girl usually known as Vera.



As she stroked him, he purred and purred as though he was trying to tell her how much he liked to be petted. So she sang to him the words of a little kitty-song she had learned at kindergarten :

‘ I love little pussy, her coat is so warm,
And if I don't hurt her she'll do me no harm.’

Grandma looked lovingly at the pair who were here

interrupted by a hearty voice saying : " Why, Jack, have you found that rocking-chair so soon ? "

" Of course he has, grandpa, for now *I* am Martha and I'm going to let him take all his naps there."

" Oh, you're Martha, are you ? Well, then, Martha, I suppose you will cook my dinner for me, won't you ? "

" Yes, indeed. Grandma is going to tell me what to do and I am going to cook all kinds of nice things for you. You'll see ——" and the little new Martha nodded her head in a very wise manner.

Grandpa laughed, saying : " You will please make a strawberry shortcake for dessert this noon. Plenty of Buttercup's cream on it, too, with plenty of strawberries—all very ripe and very red. Now, Martha, that is the delicious dessert I am going to think of while I am about my work. Good-bye, Martha."

" Good-bye, grandpa," and the little new Martha put her arms around grandpa's neck and gave him a hug, ending it with a kiss.

" May I make a strawberry shortcake, grandma ? " asked the little girl as she danced about the kitchen floor.

" There aren't any berries picked and you know John has gone to town. I am afraid it would be too

hard work for such a little Martha as I have to help me to-day," answered grandma.

"Oh, but I can pick some. I helped yesterday. And I'll be careful and not step on the vines. Martha said I must be careful when I went with her yesterday."

"All right," assented grandma; "you may try."

"And may I use the pretty Indian basket with the red and green marks on it to put them in?"

"Yes," again answered grandma.

Oh, how happy little Vera was as she gathered those beautiful red berries, and how fast they filled the little basket, to be sure. So fast did her nimble fingers fly that it really seemed to grandma a very short time before the little new Martha was back with her basket full of berries, and her eyes shining as bright as it was possible for a pair of happy blue eyes to shine.

Then when it was time to prepare the dessert, the little new Martha was as busy as a bee. First grandma told her to get the colander to put the berries in when they had taken off the hulls or stems that had kept the berries on the vines.

"But I don't call them hulls, grandma; I think they are the berries' little green caps that they wear



to make them look pretty. Of course they like to look pretty just the same as the flowers do. Everything likes to look pretty; don't you think so, ma'am?" asked the little girl, suddenly remembering she was Martha and shouldn't say grandma.

"Yes, indeed!" assented the wise lady.

"Now we will take two cups of Reliable flour, Martha, and put it in the sieve with a half teaspoon of salt."

"Yes, ma'am," answered the little new Martha as she flew about obeying orders.

"Now a small piece of washed butter all cut in

very fine pieces after you sift the flour. Now I will pour in some milk and you may stir," continued grandma.

Then the little new Martha put the colander of berries under the running water of the faucet for a minute. Leaving them to drain, she next helped grandma whip the cream to put on the top of the shortcake just as grandpa ordered.

I wish you could have seen that shortcake with its white cream top into which the little new Martha set some of the very largest and reddest of the berries. Grandpa said it was a work of art but grandma told him it was a work of love.

When he ate some of it, however, he said: "I don't believe I shall have the other Martha come back again, I seem to like this cake so much better than those she makes."

Grandma smiled on the happy little girl as she said: "Yes, it is very nice, and you certainly owe it to the little new Martha who picked the berries, helped take off their green caps and proved herself a very orderly cook."

Just then Vera was glad to be herself again so she could give grandpa another hug and kiss as he thanked her for carrying out his order for dessert.



THE BIRTHDAY CAKE

“GOOD-BYE, good-bye,” sang out a little piping voice in response to the waving of handkerchiefs from the car window. Then, with the throwing of kisses both from the little girl and the two people at the window, the long train puff-puffed like some great creature waking up after having had a nap, and steamed off out of the station, leaving a small girl smiling happily into a lady’s face, as she exclaimed: “Now I’m your own little girl for four whole weeks, aren’t I, Auntie May?”

"Yes, for four good long weeks with seven days in each one of them. And we'll have just the happiest time ever," answered the smiling lady.

"Oh, I know we shall," said the small girl, skipping gaily along toward the end of the station. "I wish papa and mama were going to stay too; but if they have to go away I am glad I don't have to." Then as if she thought she wasn't being quite loyal to her parents she added: "I love them both dearly, Auntie May, but I love you so much I am glad to be your little girl all by myself without any other auntie, or papa, or mama."

"But there is Uncle Ned, where does he come in?" asked Auntie May.

"Oh, he comes in, but"—(here the little girl thought a minute)—"not in a papa-uncle way the same as you do a mama-auntie one."

Auntie May laughed at this, but Flora took two or three little skipping steps more as she said: "I mean it, Auntie May, I am to be just your own six-year-old Flora until June twenty-second and then I shall be your seven-year-old Flora."

"Sure enough! You will soon have a birthday," assented Auntie May.

"Yes, in June. Mama says I am a rosebud be-



cause I am a little girl who has her birthday in the month when roses bloom. Do you think so, Auntie May?"

"I think you are rather a lively rosebud this afternoon, Flora," answered Auntie May. "But you know Flora means plant or flower so perhaps your particular kind of a flower may be a rosebud."

The days passed all too swiftly to the happy little girl at her Auntie May's. When it was nearly time for the birthday and Auntie told Flora she was to have a party and invite six little girls, it certainly seemed

to the child that her cup of joy was running over. When she recovered from her surprise she hugged her Auntie May so hard that Uncle Ned laughed heartily, saying: "There certainly seems enough of that hug for some of it to come this way. Don't you think so, Florakins?"

"Yes, indeed!" she answered, and flying to his side she gave him so big a hug that he pretended to be choked. "Well! well!" he exclaimed, "I shan't have any breath left for the party if I am invited. Am I going to be invited?" he asked looking very soberly at Flora, although his eyes were twinkling.

"Yes, of course you are to be invited the very first one; I invite you right now. You will please to come early, too," answered Flora as she danced away to tell Katie about the party and the good time they were sure to have.

Katie seemed as much delighted as even Flora could wish her to be, and when she said: "I think, miss, my part will be to set the table, out under the big elm," Flora was so excited she ran to Auntie May to tell her what Katie had said, even forgetting to stop on her way to tell Uncle Ned.

"I had thought of that," answered Auntie May, "but the elm is so far away. I am afraid it will

make you too much work, Katie," she continued to the work-girl who had followed on behind the skipping child.

"I'd be glad to do it for her, ma'am," said smiling Katie, while Flora pleaded: "Please, let's have the table under the elm, it's so pretty out there. I can help, I am sure." Then turning to Katie she asked: "What can I do to help you, Katie?"

Katie thought a minute and then answered: "You may help make the cake, miss ——" at which Flora clapped her hands saying: "I'm so glad you thought of that, for then I can do something for everybody here. Of course they will each want a piece of cake."

The next morning found Katie and Flora in the kitchen where they were planning and talking about the cake, for Auntie May had said Flora might have just the kind of a cake she wanted.

"Now, miss," said Katie, "shall we make a Washington pie?"

"Why, Katie, you know we don't want to make a pie. How can a cake be a pie?"

"Oh! oh!" laughed Katie, "that is too funny. Don't you know the kind of a cake we make in thin cakes and then put them together is called a Washington pie?"

"No, Katie, I didn't know about that, but I am glad to learn it when I am seven years old. I like that kind of a cake, too, so we will make a Washington pie."

So they creamed one-half cup of butter, added one cup of sugar, one-half cup of milk and three eggs, together with a cup of Reliable flour—Flora helping in every part until it was ready to be baked, Katie seeing to that. Then they frosted it and the cake was all ready to be set upon the table with its seven pink candles that Uncle Ned brought home as a surprise.

The party was a real success, for all the little girls were so happy. First they played games until they were tired, then they sang kindergarten songs and had their circle on the lawn.

At last came the supper under the beautiful elm where Flora's pretty cake was in the very center of the table.

Uncle Ned helped to make a very happy ending to their happy day when he took them home in his automobile; leaving each little girl at her own door.



MUD PIES

“ Thirty cents for a small mud pie !
Don't you think that rather high ? ”
We asked of little Nan and Sue.
“ Thirty cents should buy us two ! ”
“ We would like to sell them so , ”
Answered Nan ; “ but don't you know , ”
And she paused to fill a cup ,
“ Water 'n' sand have both gone up ! ”



DORA'S GREAT SURPRISE

DORA'S family rose earlier than usual the morning of the pioneer picnic. For that matter all the country folks in the neighborhood surprised birds and morning-glories at the same hour. There was so much work to be done on the farm before leaving home, even a little girl like Dora went from one task to another fast as she could travel.

While her brothers helped their father milk the cows and do all the chores, Dora set the table and helped her mother get breakfast. She beat eggs for pancakes, sifted the flour, put soda in the sour milk and didn't waste any time watching the mixture foam when the soda began to do its work.

The little girl then went to the windmill and brought a pitcher full of cold water for the table. She put the chairs in their places and remembered big spoons and napkins. Next she went down cellar for a plate of butter and a pitcher of cream. After breakfast Dora helped her mother clear the table and wash dishes.

When the calves were fed and the pigs and chickens, and there were no more pails standing around in the kitchen, one of the boys brought two covered market baskets to hold the picnic lunch.

"And be sure to put in enough bread and butter and fried chicken," said he, "because at noon we'll be hungry as bears."

Accordingly, Dora's mother began cutting slices of bread until Dora laughed and called her a bread-cutting machine, while she herself spread on the butter trying to keep up. At last when every slice had been carefully gone over, mother brought in a

pan of crispy lettuce leaves and a bowl of salad dressing ; when straightway she and Dora made forty lettuce sandwiches.

“ That is a good many ! ” observed Dora.

“ We will share with our neighbors,” replied Dora’s mother. “ Now I’ll pack the hard boiled eggs in the basket, while you fill that big salt shaker and tie a cloth over the top so the salt won’t spoil our cakes and pies. Then you run down cellar and bring me four two-quart fruit cans for milk. After that you may help me fill the cream puffs. Your father will make a better speech after dinner if he has cream puffs.”

Pioneer picnics were always held in Mr. Rodman’s woods beyond the red schoolhouse. It was only a short distance from Dora’s home, but in order to carry ice-cream and a bushel of apples in addition to picnic baskets, father hitched up old Nancy and he and mother started for the grounds as soon as they were ready. Dora didn’t go with them because some one had to stay home until Mr. Moses Black should come for his maple syrup at nine o’clock.

“ I just as soon stay as not,” offered Dora, “ and then I will walk over with the boys. Nobody will be there as early as this anyway, except folks like



you who are on committees and have work to do. I know Beth Adams won't be there yet."

In due time Mr. Moses Black arrived and departed with his maple syrup.

"Are you coming?" inquired brother John, opening the sitting-room door to call his sister.

"Yes, I'll be along in a minute; I've got to find the cat and put her out. You needn't wait for me."

Scarcely were the boys gone when Dora saw a weary looking little old lady coming up the garden path.

"Who can she be?" Dora said aloud. "I'll go meet her."

"Will you kindly tell me where Lyman Adams lives?" inquired the little old lady. "I am his Aunt Clarissy and I am not expected. At the station I was told that he lived only a quarter of a mile away, but it seems to me I have walked half a mile already."

"Oh, you have come in the wrong direction!" exclaimed Dora.

Observing how warm and tired the little old lady seemed to be, she begged her to come in and rest.

"Wouldn't you like to have me make you a cup of tea?" asked Dora.

"Can such a mite of a girl as you make tea?" inquired the little old lady.

"Oh, I am older than I look," Dora answered. "I am eleven, going on twelve, and mama has taught me to make tea. She isn't here just now and it is lucky I am home."

"So it is," agreed the little old lady, "and I shall be obliged to you if you will make me a cup of tea. I don't see how I could walk much further without it."

Dora immediately poured hot water in the wee brown teapot and let it stand while she ran to the windmill for fresh water. Then she stirred up the fire and placed the teakettle back on the stove with perhaps a quart of fresh water in it. When the teakettle began to sing, Dora emptied the teapot and put in it enough tea leaves so the little old lady could have two cups full if she wished. Then she poured boiling water over the tea leaves and carried it on a tray to the little old lady. On the tray was also cream and sugar, bread, butter and cookies.

"I thought you might be hungry," Dora explained.

"I thank you, my dear," replied the little old lady. "I am sure I never had a more delightful surprise."



"Now if you will please make yourself at home and excuse me for a minute," Dora continued, "I will run over to Beth Adams' house and tell her that some of her folks must come right over after you with a horse and buggy. Beth is my best friend."

Before the little old lady could protest, Dora was running across lots to tell Mr. Lyman Adams that his Aunt Clarissy had arrived and looked too tired to go to a pioneer picnic.

"So I didn't say picnic to her," the child finished, "and she doesn't know there is one."

"Climb right in and we'll drive over after her," declared Mr. Adams. "We were just about ready to start for the grounds. So my Aunt Clarissy came and thought she'd walk out to our house, did she? Well, well! Get up, old Ned, you are going now after one of the finest old ladies that ever rode in a carriage."

When Beth Adams finally arrived at the picnic grounds, she searched immediately for Dora.

"Oh, Dora!" she exclaimed, "I have the best news! Oh, it is too good! Aunt Clarissy owns a cottage at the seashore and she has invited you to come with me and stay all summer. She says if her cook should leave suddenly it would be worth

a lot to her to have you around to make a cup of tea ! ”

“ Oh, mama, may I go ? ” asked Dora, turning eagerly to her mother.

“ Certainly you may, ” was the answer. “ I have heard much good spoken of Mr. Adams’ Aunt Clarissy. But how I shall miss my little cook ! ”

“ I’ll write often, ” promised Dora, and she did.



THE LITTLE FISH IN SCHOOL

" Little fishes in the brook,
Papa catch them with a hook,"

sang big brother teasingly, but Margie was too happy to care. It was not just that she was going to cooking school, for cooking school had never before made Margie's heart jump up and down as it did to-day. It was not just that she was going to cook fish, either, for Margie had always thought of that as something she would rather not do. It was just this : dear Uncle John was coming to visit them the next Saturday and Margie's mother had said, " Now if you can cook your fish well, so that the teacher is satisfied, you may cook one for dinner on Saturday. But you know Uncle John is a famous fisherman, so he will probably be particular how it is done."

Margie had not seen Uncle John for almost a year and the thought that he was coming was enough to make her happy, but to be allowed to cook his fish ! Oh, joy ! She fairly danced out of the door with her

bag under her arm, the precious bag that held her clean white apron and cap and her fat note-book.

She blew into the room like a gay little breeze and Miss Robinson looked up from her desk with a smile. "You are an early bird to-day," she said. Then she asked Margie to watch the tomatoes that were cooking on one of the burners, and while she did this the little maid chattered as fast as her tongue could fly about Uncle John and what a wonderful thing was going to happen. Miss Robinson was much interested and promised to help her learn how to cook fish exactly right.

Margie could hardly wait until the other girls had filed in and taken their places. Never before had it taken so long, she thought, to collect the bags, wash hands, review the last week's lesson and read over the recipes for the day. But at last the girls were divided off into groups of four and Miss Robinson had explained what kind of fish should be baked and what kind fried, and how the cunning little perch that lay in a pan on her desk were to be baked with dressing and served with tomato sauce. She explained how to select fresh fish and how important it is that they should not be the least bit old.

"Such a lot of little things to remember!" frowned



Grace, at Margie's side. But Margie thought of Uncle John and knew that every little thing counts, and surely when a man is used to having fish right out of the lake, freshness must count a great deal.

Now Miss Robinson was saying, "Number one in each group may bring a pie tin for crumbs from the jar at the end of the row. Number two may measure the butter into the little saucepan and put it on to melt." And so on until each girl had her share of preparing the dressing.

How Margie did fly for those crumbs! They needed to be crushed finer than they were, but as so little was to be used, Miss Robinson said there was no need of getting out the rolling-pins. Most of the girls were using their fingers, but in a twinkling Margie thought of a better way. Out came a tin spoon and the back of it was soon crushing the crumbs finely.

Miss Robinson nodded approvingly. "I see one little girl who is using her brain," she said. "That's what a cook needs to do most of all if she wants to be successful."

Soon the dressing was made and the fish were given out, one for each group. It was Grace's duty to take off the head of the fish for Margie's group, but she cut away at it without making any impression.

To tell the truth, she acted as if she were the least bit afraid of the fish. "Let me take it," said Margie. She snapped the neck neatly with a determined jerk of her quick little hands.

Miss Robinson smiled. "I see one girl," she said, "who has a good strong will and is not going to be easily discouraged, and that is another of the qualities needed to make a good cook."

How Margie did watch every step of washing and preparing the fish! And how cunning they all looked at last, laid side by side in the baking pan, ready for the oven!

While they were baking, the girls were to make the sauce. Margie's group had theirs on the burner very quickly. Then they all gathered around Margie, who was busy opening the eye of the fish, which Miss Robinson had said would be pretty inside. "Pop!" went something suddenly. The sauce had boiled over, so hard that there was not much left in the pan. Some of it went on Margie's hand and burned her. In spite of her attempt to be brave, she burst out crying.

"Does it hurt so much?" asked Miss Robinson. "I'll bind it up."

"No, it isn't that," sobbed Margie, "but now I've

spoiled the whole lesson and I can't cook the fish for Uncle John."

"Oh, yes, you can," answered Miss Robinson. "All cooks make mistakes sometimes. You've done so beautifully with the fish itself that I am sure you can cook one for Uncle John. If you are very quick you'll have time to make some more sauce and you will know how all the better for doing it twice."

So Margie dried her tears and forgot her sore finger. Soon the sauce was made and strained, all smooth and pink. Then the fish came hot out of the oven and how delicious it did taste!

A few minutes later Margie was dancing away home, happy and yet thoughtful, and very determined that no accidents should happen on the day when she cooked for Uncle John.



THE BIG FISH AT HOME

SATURDAY morning had come at last. In a little while Uncle John would come and in a little while longer Margie, her very own self, would be cooking the fish for his dinner. She had dreamed of it all night and very early in the morning she had slipped out into the kitchen to begin making things ready.

There was no cooking-school teacher here to have the crumbs for the dressing all handy in a jar and the tomatoes and onions for sauce cooking on the stove. But it was well that Margie had to work hard with mother's big rolling-pin and the paring-

knife, or she would surely have gone wild with waiting.

The jolly young uncle with the curly brown hair and laughing blue eyes came at last, though, and Margie had not been sitting on his lap very long before she leaned up close and whispered her secret in his ear.

"Going to cook a fish for me? Well, you're a brick!" cried Uncle John. "You're my girl every time if you can cook fish. What kind is it? A nice fresh one, I suppose."

How glad Margie was that she had helped to buy it herself and knew that it was bluefish, and the freshest to be had!

Only mother was in the kitchen when Margie tore herself away from the company and slipped out to continue her work. Her thoughts danced and her hands flew but it was hard to keep them flying at the things they were meant to do. She went first for a pan of water in which to wash the fish, then she remembered that the dressing should be made first. Mother, smiling to see the table covered with dishes, said, "I guess I'd better work in the pantry and be out of the way of the new cook."

The new cook had a hard time with the head of

the big fish. She had opened her mouth to call mother to help her cut it off when she remembered how Miss Robinson had praised her in school for not being easily discouraged, so she went to work again with a will and conquered.

Then Carl came and stood in the doorway.

“ Little fishes in the brook,
Papa catch them with a hook,”

he teased. Margie's cheeks were red with excitement. It was not much fun to be teased at such a critical moment, but she tried not to notice it.

“ Oh, you dance around so much ! ” laughed Carl, as she hurried to the pantry and back and slipped over to the sink with the cloth she had used in washing the fish. To show her how, he came prancing across the floor and bumped into her, almost upsetting the dish of dressing she held in her hand.

Mother came to the rescue by sending Carl out to gather parsley for garnishing the fish ; but then to make matters worse, the dining-room door opened and there stood Uncle John ! Margie's hand trembled as she worked. But at last she lifted the big fish, laid it in the buttered pan, then filled it with the dressing and piled about it what was left. Then mother and uncle inspected it.



JOSEPHINE BRUCE

"Put a little butter over the top," said mother.

"But we didn't do that in school."

"No, the teacher was probably showing you how to be economical, but a little butter will make it taste better and I guess we can afford it—just this once," she added laughingly, "since Uncle John is here." So many, many things to learn! thought Margie.

Into the oven at last went the fish in all its glory and Uncle John came handy then, for he held the oven door open so that Margie would not burn herself and then fixed the fire so that it would be very hot.

Now the sauce was to be made. Uncle John stood there telling stories of his fishing in the Muskoka Lakes, till his niece scarcely knew whether she peppered the sauce once or twice, but somehow she succeeded in mixing it in the saucepan and setting it cooking. Then "Hurrah!" cried uncle, swinging her to his shoulder and racing into the pantry where mother was.

"Piff!" Margie almost fell to the floor in her haste to reach the stove. That hot fire had done its best to spoil her sauce, but she had just saved it. "Too many cooks spoil the fish," said Uncle John, laughingly, disappearing as quickly as he had come.

Margie sat down near the stove, feeling very hot and tired enough to cry. She wondered how mother could ever eat anything after cooking a whole meal, if it felt this way just to have cooked a fish. She rose wearily when mother came to show her how to baste her fish. But when she saw it turning a beautiful brown, her spirits began to revive and she thought perhaps it was worth while learning to cook after all.

When the whole family gathered around the table, with Margie's triumph of cookery in the center, and she heard her praises ringing all around, the little cook's eyes shone with happiness. Big brother's "Doesn't it look dandy, though!" made up for all his teasing. But best of all came Uncle John's big round voice: "Well, if I have a niece who can cook fish like this for the first time in her life, with all of us folks looking on and bothering her, she's just the girl I want for a week at my camp next summer. May I have her?"

When mother said yes, Margie jumped right out of her chair and ran around and hugged everybody. Did it pay to learn to cook? Well, there was not a bit of doubt of it in Margie's mind right then.

HELPING WITH THE LUNCHEON

YOU can't guess! You can't guess!" sang Milton Vaughan as his sister Mollie came into the room where he was busily engaged sorting over the contents of a box, evidently looking for some particular article.

"Can't guess what?" inquired Mollie eagerly. "Is it something nice that is going to happen, Milton?"

"Well, you can just think it is," teasingly answered Milton. Then, as if talking to himself, he slowly added: "Automobile, Uncle Will, Aunt Carrie, Mama, Louise, Jack, you and I."

"Milton Vaughan! are we really and truly going to have an automobile ride?" asked Mollie, her eyes big with the joy of the thought.

"Yes, ma'am, really and truly. We are going to Assonet Point and have our luncheon; then we can stay a long time—Louise, Jack, you and I can go in the water and have no end of fun. I'm looking for a fish line I used to have last summer, but it isn't

here. I think the Point is a place to dig clams rather than to fish anyway ; so we better take our hoes along and try our luck at clam digging."

"All right," assented Mollie. "When are we going?"

"To-morrow morning at nine o'clock," answered Milton quite puffed up with the opportunity to tell all the good news to his interested sister who was so excited by this time that she danced up and down the room while she clapped her hands for joy.

"I'm so glad! I'm so glad!" chanted Mollie as she flew out of the room to find her mother and get additional information ; while Milton pursed up his lips and whistled the music they had been having at school to march by : "Sousa's Stars and Stripes Forever," seeming to let out some of his joy and anticipation of the good time coming by making the music as loud as he could.

At breakfast the next morning the children were so happy they fairly bubbled over. Papa Vaughan laughed at his little daughter as he said : "Well, Mollie, I think you have one of Sunny Jim's smiles this morning ; it doesn't seem to come off."

"How can I help having it, papa, when I see how beautiful the day is and think about the ride and all



the good times ahead? All I wish for more is that you were going, too."

"And I wish so, but I am going to stand back of a little window and pay out money so other people may have good times. They most always look happy when they get their money, and I like to see people happy. But I shall have some days soon that I am sure we can fill full of good times, for I can think of quantities of things to do even now."

"Oh, goody! goody!" exclaimed Milton and Mollie both together, for they knew by glad experience what jolly days they spent when papa and mama were both with them.

But soon papa kissed all three of his home-makers good-bye and ran to catch the train that would take him to the little window he had been telling the children about.

"Now," said Mama Vaughan, "we have a good deal to do to be in readiness when Uncle Will gets here. We don't want to be late a minute, so we will divide the work: Milton may be errand boy or handy-man, Mollie may be cook and help put up the luncheon, and I will do all sorts of things to help along."

"I am glad to be cook," said Mollie. "What shall I do first, mama?"

"You are to boil some eggs and stuff them," answered Mrs. Vaughan. "Get a stewpan, put in a quart of water and set it on the stove. Then watch, and when it gets to boiling take the long handled spoon and gently put in a dozen eggs. Look at the clock and see that they boil seven minutes. Then take them off and cool in fresh water."

"All right," said Mollie, "I am sure I can do that just as you have told me."

When the eggs were boiled and cooled Mollie's nimble fingers flew as she took off the shells and cut open each egg so to remove the little golden ball that had been hidden in the pretty white house. She stopped long enough, however, to ask Milton if the white part didn't look like white shiny nests, at which he laughed, saying: "Yes, they look like that now, but, Mollie, I'll tell you when I eat a few what they seem the most like."

When the yolks were all in a bowl by themselves, Mollie added salt, pepper, butter and some salad dressing, after which she chopped them all together and filled the little white nests again with the golden mixture. Then she carefully pressed two halves together and wrapped each egg up in a square of waxed paper; finishing just as mama had put the

rest of the luncheon into the basket the handy-man had brought from the attic where it had been stowed away since last summer's luncheon days.

With such willing helpers as her handy-man and her little cook, Mrs. Vaughan and the two children were all ready when they heard the honk ! honk ! of Uncle Will's car.

They appeared at the door with smiling faces ; Milton dressed in his khaki play-suit, and Mollie wearing a pretty new sunbonnet in which, Uncle Will told her, she looked like a bee in a blossom.





MAKING A CAKE

It's very difficult to make
 Even a little loaf of cake.
 You search for bowls and spoons and things—
 It seems as if they all had wings.
 And then you pour and beat and stir,
 And make the egg-beater go whir-r-r !

The cake came out all nice and brown,
 With just the middle tumbled down.
 It's mother's birthday,—her surprise,—
 And baby helps, at least, he tries !
 And so, although my arm does ache,
 What do I care ? We've made a cake !

—By Rebecca D. Moore.



USING THE NEW TEA-SET

EUNICE ATKINS was sitting on the lawn watching out for her big college brother to come. She had patiently sat there for a long time, so when she finally saw him coming, it did seem as though she couldn't fly fast enough over the ground to get to him. Then it seemed, too, she couldn't hug him hard enough to show him how glad she was to see him, for she loved him so.

"Well, Miss Muffet, glad to see your big brother?" inquired Jack Atkins.

"Glad, Jack? Why, I'm so glad I can most cry," answered the little girl.

"Ha, ha," laughed Jack, "that's being too glad.

But I've brought you something way from the big city of Boston. What do you think it is?"

"Oh, Jack! I'm sure I can never guess."

"Well, try. You may guess twice. Now, Miss Muffet, what is No. 1 guess?"

"I guess it's a baby doll, Jack, that can open and shut its eyes and wear long dresses."

"Can't any doll wear long dresses?"

"Oh, no. Only baby dolls and big lady dolls wear long dresses. But is it a baby doll, Jack?"

"No. And there's one good guess gone. Now for No. 2 guess, Miss Tiddledy Winks. What's No. 2?"

"I guess—I guess," said Eunice as she thought hard what the package might contain,—“I guess it's a carriage to take my dollies out to ride in. You know, Jack, my Lady Isabel doll is very particular about what sort of a carriage she rides in.”

"Oh, is she? Well, I'm thinking she will have to wait for a coach and six, for I haven't a carriage this time. Both your guesses are gone, so you will have to look and find out for yourself."

So saying Jack set the package down, and telling his small sister to "go ahead and open the box" he went into the house to find his mother and the rest of the family.

Pretty soon sounds from the lawn attracted the family where Eunice was capering about and uttering little squeals of delight at the sight of the pretty tea-set the package had contained.

"Oh, Jack! oh, Jack!" the small girl exclaimed as she ran to him and was caught in his strong arms—so excited she was most crying.

"Why, what's this, miss, don't you like it?" inquired Jack.

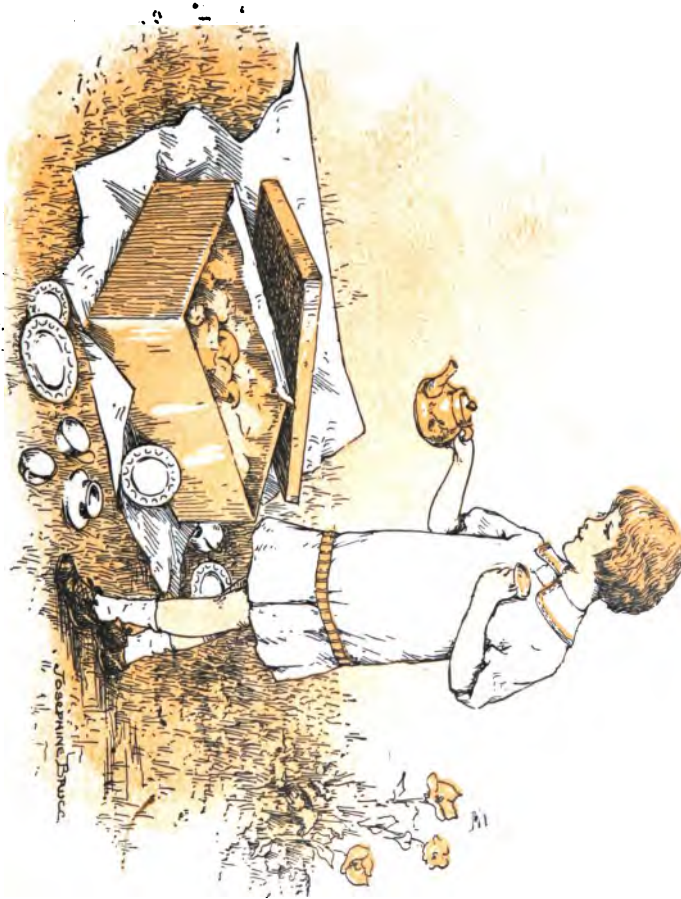
"Yes, indeed! Jack, I like it so I most ache," answered Eunice. "I've wanted a tea-set for a long time, and this is so pretty I can't like it enough."

"Oh, yes you can and do," answered Jack laughing. "But show it to us and tell us its good qualities."

Then Eunice very proudly showed them the pretty flowered plates, the cups and saucers, the sugar bowl, the creamer, and, at last, the teapot that she declared was "the very cutest of all."

"Now you have your tea-set we shall expect invitations to a tea party soon," said Jack. "Aren't you going to have a tea party and have tea biscuits? I'm very fond of tea biscuits," Jack continued teasingly.

"Oh, Jack! I'd just like to have a tea party and invite you, and Bess, and Nina, and Amy," naming three small girl friends.



Jack laughed and laughed until Eunice laughed too, but she really didn't see the least thing funny in inviting her big brother with her little girl friends, for she always liked to have her brother Jack along, he made everything so good timey.

But that tea party idea had taken firm root in Eunice's mind, and mama was asked many times if she didn't think it was time to have it.

At last there came a day when Jack was sure to be home (for he was nursing a sprained ankle) that mama told Eunice she might have her tea party.

"And may I make the tea biscuits, mama?" asked Eunice eagerly.

"Yes, if Rose is willing to show you," answered Mrs. Atkins.

Then followed some very mysterious visits to the kitchen—Eunice trying her best not to tell Jack about the biscuits she was about to make; but really wanting to tell him so badly that she had to put her small hand over her mouth to keep the secret in.

Rose said they would take a pint of Reliable flour and Eunice might sift it. This she did as she stood in a chair beside Rose who was as interested in the party as was Eunice herself. "Now measure one-half teaspoon of salt and add that to the flour," continued

Rose, "after which you may pour in milk so I can make a dough you can cut out into biscuits."

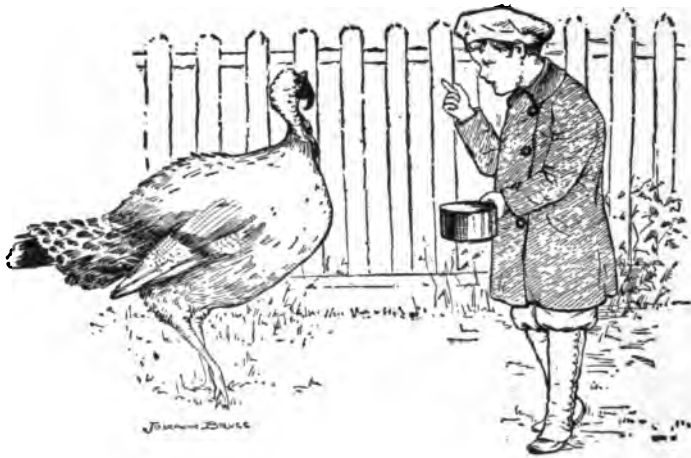
And such fun as it was to cut out those tiny biscuits with—(you never could guess) a little cover of a spice box!

But the best part really came when the table was set with the new tea-set, and Bess, and Nina, and Amy were all there, with Jack close by in his big chair waiting to be served by the proud little hostess.

They all pronounced the biscuits very nice, but Jack put on the finishing touch when he said: "Please, Miss Katydid, may I have two more helpings of those delicious biscuits? You know they are rather small for such a big fellow as I am. Who made them, anyway?"

Then his delighted little sister replied: "I did, brother Jack, so you could have just what you liked when you came to the tea-set party."





THE TURKEY'S COMPLAINT

"Turkey ! turkey ! what's the matter ?
Every day you're getting fatter !"
Said our Melville, gazing hard,
At the turkey in the yard.

" Ah," replied the turkey, blinking,
" Melville, I am sadly thinking,
Men give thanks I well remember,
The last Thursday in November.

" And if I'm not fat and tender,
How can they their praises render ?
And I can but drop a tear,
When I think the day so near."

Then the turkey with his claw
Wiped a tear from either jaw ;
And with a sigh that seemed deep drawn,
Turned, and went on eating corn.

—By *N. Daniel Davis.*

THE LITTLE VILLAGE HELPERS

NO, it was not really a club; at least, it was not meant to be a club.

When Evelyn and Linda got together that rainy Monday afternoon just to learn to weave baskets they little thought what that meeting would mean in the end; but when, the following day, they told one or two of the other girls what they had been doing and showed them the pretty little baskets that they had started to make it was not surprising that one of the other little girls should ask if the next time she could not join them.

All this was in the early summer; school had closed and the days seemed long to the children when there was nothing particular to do.

"Why, yes," said Linda's mother when Linda told her of how two or three of the other little girls had asked her if they could not join Evelyn and herself when they next met to make baskets, "I should be glad to have them come in and perhaps after we get the baskets weaved we can do something else."

And that was how the little crowd of girls got together and after Linda's mother had showed them all how they could weave baskets, making them into one shape and another, the lady across the street offered to teach them all how to darn stockings.

It was not surprising, therefore, that after two or three weeks had passed, when one of the little helpers asked why they could not form a club that the idea was agreed upon, and when the name of "The Little Village Helpers" was suggested every one thought that it was a good one.

And so during the summer, sometimes once a week and sometimes once every two weeks, the "Little Helpers" would gather together at some one of their homes and learn how to do something useful.

"I would like to have the 'Little Helpers' on my table," said Mrs. Rand, when the ladies connected with the Village Improvement Society began to talk of plans for the Improvement Society Fair which was to be held the last of August. And so it was that "The Little Helpers," as a club, joined in the work of making the Village Improvement Society Fair a big success.

This was the incentive that they needed, and how they did work on those bibs and dust cloths and

holders until "The Little Helpers'" table at the fair was one of the most attractive ones there.

But the "Little Helpers" had a big surprise for the townspeople when the parade, which was held just before the fair opened, took place. So carefully and quietly had they planned that but few knew anything about it, and when down the street came twelve doll carriages all decorated in so many different pretty ways every one along the sidewalk gave the "Little Helpers" a cheer. It was a pretty sight to see them pushing their doll carriages two by two, and nobody enjoyed it any more than the dollies themselves, who were all dressed up in their best. Some of the carriages were decorated with golden-rod, some had sweet peas wound around the spokes of the wheels, while others had American flags waving from every place where they could be tied on, and the children themselves were all dressed differently. And after the parade was over and the fair had closed every one voted that the "Little Helpers" had been one of the biggest successes of the whole fair.

After school had opened and when the bell rang for the children to get into line and march in you would sometimes see two of the Little Helpers go

arm in arm to join the line, for whenever they had a chance they always got off together and talked over plans for their Little Helpers' Club.

"Let's do something for Christmas," said Linda one Saturday afternoon when the club met, for after school opened they had to change their day of meeting from Monday to Saturday.

"Why not?" said Evelyn. "We can make lots of things and perhaps we can take them around at Christmas time."

And so it was decided that they should all work for Christmas; not for something for themselves but something to give away to some one who really needed it, and Linda's mother suggested that each of them think it over and see if there were not some poor children whom they might know for whom they could make something which would be really useful.

Such a time as they had planning! First of all as to what they would try to make; then to whom they were going to give it!

"Why don't some of you make some nice warm wristers for the old ladies up at the Old Folks' Home?" suggested Evelyn's mother one day, to her and Linda, when they were talking over their plans.

"Let's do that," said Linda. "That will be something which we can make nicely, and how warm and nice they will be."

So Linda and Evelyn decided to work on wristers. Marjorie and Alice chose to make some baskets and fill them with candy and send them up to the children's hospital, so that in the end all of them had some one thing that they were going to do.

Week after week the little fingers worked until the cold days of December came, when it was more difficult for them to get together, for it seemed as though every Saturday afternoon it either rained or snowed.

Then came Christmas vacation. Linda and Evelyn had planned to do so much but it seemed that every day it stormed. First would come a heavy snow and then rain until poor Linda became discouraged, for what were she and Evelyn going to do, for they had a lot of packages to get ready and take around to the Home.

"I'll tell you what you can do," said Linda's mother as she saw her little girl looking out of the window at the falling snow. "Why don't you and Evelyn fill some of those Christmas candy boxes which I have up-stairs?"

"With candy, do you mean?" said Linda. "But

we haven't any, and how is Evelyn going to get over to the house? "

" Well," said Linda's mother, " perhaps we can get Evelyn over here in some way through the storm, and if you will agree to bring a little sunshine into the kitchen it may be Nora will help you to make something to put in those boxes."

At that Linda's face brightened and when Evelyn appeared trudging through the snow in answer to a telephone message between the two mamas, it was a cheerful little girl who met her at the door.

" Come in, Evelyn," she said. " Nora is going to help us to make something to put in some Christmas boxes, which we can take up with the other things we are going to have."

And so it was in the kitchen that afternoon that the little girls took their first lesson in making candy.

As a usual thing Nora didn't care to have any little folks bothering her in the kitchen, for " they always keep putting their fingers into everything," she had said, and then, too, the same disagreeable weather which had made Linda so uncomfortable because she was kept indoors, had not made Nora very cheerful either.

But somehow the little girls knew that even when Nora was cross she really didn't mean it, and so when she asked them in sort of an impatient way, "What do you want to make?" and Linda had replied, "Why, anything that you want," Nora became pleasant.

"Mama said that we might fill some of her candy boxes to add to the things which we are going to take out to the Old Folks' Home as a surprise to them for their Christmas."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" replied Nora. "Why, surely you ought to have some candy, for it would not be Christmas unless there was lots of candy around and I guess that we can make some just about as good as any which they will have."

"Now we must not make any very hard candy for the old ladies don't have very good teeth. Let's see, they all like peppermints, don't they, and perhaps some of them might like some chocolate fudge; both of those are nice and soft; that is, if we don't boil them too long."

"Can we make some of both?" asked Linda.

"Why, I guess so," said Nora. "We don't have to make them at the same time, and we have a nice long afternoon before us."



JOSEPHINE BRUCE

"And can we help?" asked Evelyn.

And so after Nora had cleaned out her pantry and got everything put away she found a couple of little aprons and covered her little pupils all over so they would not get anything on their pretty dresses, she started to show them just how to make their fudge.

"Why, is that all you do to it?" asked Linda after Nora had told her how to take a couple of cups of sugar, half a cup of milk, a square of chocolate and a piece of butter about the size of a banty's egg and put them all into a kettle.

"No, because you have got to be careful and watch it while it boils and not let it boil too hard."

"But how can you tell when it is done?" asked Evelyn as she watched the first bubbles appear after the chocolate had melted so that sugar and everything looked real good and brown.

"I'll show you," said Nora, and she went for a dipper with a little cold water in it. "Now I will let you try it and then you can keep trying it until it is done." So she dropped a little of the boiling candy into the dipper and showed them how they must keep on trying it until that which they put into the dipper would begin to harden.

"Be careful and watch out for it and don't let it

burn," she said as she ran up-stairs to change her dress.

"We will," said both of the children, and they did, for hardly a minute passed but what they had to try the candy, getting a little taste of it each time, and when Nora came down-stairs she found it was just right to be taken off and after adding just a little bit of vanilla she beat it and beat it until it was just hard enough so she could pour it into a buttered pan.

"Do you suppose there will be enough of it, Nora," asked Evelyn, "so we can have a little taste after it is cold?"

"Why, yes," said Nora, "for I think you have earned a good big taste—each of you."

And the peppermints were still easier to make, for that required just a little sugar and water, letting it boil until it hardened in water; then Nora added a little peppermint just to flavor it, and when she had beaten it until it began to get sugary she poured it in great drops onto the pantry marble.

"We won't make any pink ones to-day," said she; "we will just make the white ones and perhaps the next stormy day, if Evelyn will come over, we will make some pink peppermints."

Nora showed them also how the fudge had to be

cut into squares, and later when she gave each a couple of pieces to try they really thought they would like to be candy makers.

The boxes were quickly filled with mama's assistance and Linda tied them nicely and neatly with ribbon and on the following day with light and happy hearts they boarded the car which would take them out to the Old Folks' Home, which was several miles from the city. They had been promised that they could go out all alone and it was a pretty picture to see the little girls, with their arms full of bundles, and Linda with a holly wreath over her arm, sitting in the car together.

The conductor promised to look after them and to help them with their bundles, for they surely needed help, for not only did they have the boxes of candy and boxes of wisters but Linda's and Evelyn's mothers had joined together and were sending a number of little things to add to their comfort.

What a hearty welcome they did receive when they got to the Home! It seemed as though every one of the old ladies wanted to take them in their arms and kiss them and as they started off home old Mrs. Betts waved them a good-bye with a "God bless the Little Helpers!"

